

BATTLE FOR OUR BIRDS

North Taranaki

Forests



Protecting native species at risk

There is a battle for survival happening throughout New Zealand. Every day rats, stoats and possums are killing birds and other native animals, and browsing on our forests killing plants and preventing regeneration.

Battle for our Birds, Tiakina Nga Manu, is the Department of Conservation's ongoing campaign to protect our native species and ecosystems at risk using aerial 1080 predator control. We must be prepared to battle for our birds, bats and plants if they are to survive. It's about protecting what's in our backyards so they can be there for future generations to enjoy.

Pest control works

DOC has identified sites where rare and endangered plants and animals are under the greatest threat. In North Taranaki, these are the Waitaanga, Parininihi/Whitecliffs and Hutiwai forests. Pest control operations are planned for these sites to limit the damage being done by rats, stoats and possums and increase the chances of breeding success for native species.

Monitoring after Battle of our Birds operations in other areas of New Zealand, such as Tongariro National Park and conservation sites in the South Island show possum and rat numbers have been knocked back, and native species have thrived: www.doc.govt.nz/battleforourbirds

The battle continues

Aerial 1080 pest control in August/September 2017 will lower predator numbers and help to protect threatened species in the Parininihi/Whitecliffs, Waitaanga and Hutawai forests. Without predator control some species could suffer heavy losses and become locally extinct.

Good neighbours

In some parts of New Zealand possums are a known host and carrier of bovine TB. The impact of having an infected herd is devastating and costly to farmers.

Possums also directly compete with livestock for food, with a large portion of many possums' diets being pasture. The highest possum population densities are found in the margins where forest and pasture meet.

DOC needs to be a good neighbor and help control the pests on public conservation land to assist neighbouring landowners.



Ship rat eating fantail chicks at nest. Photo: Nga Manu Nature Images



Possum and rat eating young birds. Photo: Nga Manu Images.



Possums pose a TB risk to cattle, and directly compete with livestock for pasture.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

WAITAANGA, HUTIWAI & WHITECLIFFS CONSERVATION AREAS

Birds, animals and plants at risk

Kokako have recently been reintroduced to the Parininihi/Whitecliffs area thanks to intensive predator control. Western brown kiwi, pōpokatea/ whitehead and toutouwai/North Island robin are still found in the Waitaanga , Hutiwai and Parininihi/Whitecliffs forests.

The areas are also home to other native birds including karearea/falcon, kereru/woodpigeon, pōpokotea/whitehead and tītīpounamu /rifleman. These birds, their eggs and chicks are vulnerable to predation from rats, possums and stoats.

Long-tailed bats/pekapeka and whio/blue duck as well as kākariki and kāka are at several sites in the Waitaanga forest, along with threatened plants including pikirangi (red mistletoe), and *Dactylanthus taylorii*. Both plants, birds and bats are highly vulnerable to possum and rat predation. Rats also eat *Dactylanthus* flowers causing recruitment failure.

Possums also browse flowers and fruit of other native plants. This prevents plants from reaching maturity and forming seeds. Possums consuming the leaves of trees causes the destruction of large areas of the canopy.

What are the likely outcomes?

With adequate predator control, the kokako, North Island brown kiwi, whitehead/ pōpokotea and North Island robin/toutouwai, kāka and kākariki populations, along with the red mistletoe, *Dactylanthus*, bats and other native birds and plants will continue to grow, and hopefully thrive in these areas.

Technology helps

Satellite navigation technology on board the helicopter ensures a highly accurate drop that is confined to the conservation areas. We'll check with you to make sure our boundary information is correct.

We'll do a trickle drop of bait around the boundary to prevent pellets from dropping onto private property.

It's important you check that your boundary fence is in good condition so that your stock don't stray into a treated area. The pre-drop notification period will give you time to shift stock to well-fenced areas.

Dogs at risk

Dogs are at risk of poisoning if they eat baits or carcasses – and there is a chance a possum may stray into pasture land or wash downstream. For this reason, it's important to keep dogs muzzled to stop them feeding on dead possums.

If you are an adjoining landowner to these areas let us know how many dogs you have and we will provide you with muzzles free of charge. These can be picked up from your local vet.

The risk to dogs remains until the carcasses have rotted, which can take up to 6 months. If in doubt please contact DOC.



North Island brown kiwi chick. Photo: Backyard Kiwi



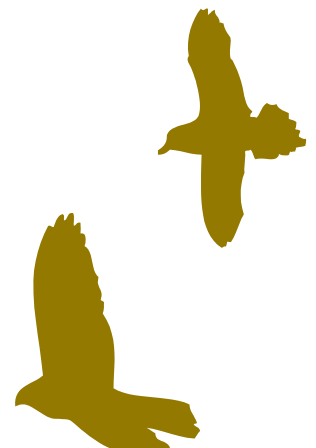
Dogs are at risk – it's important to keep them muzzled.

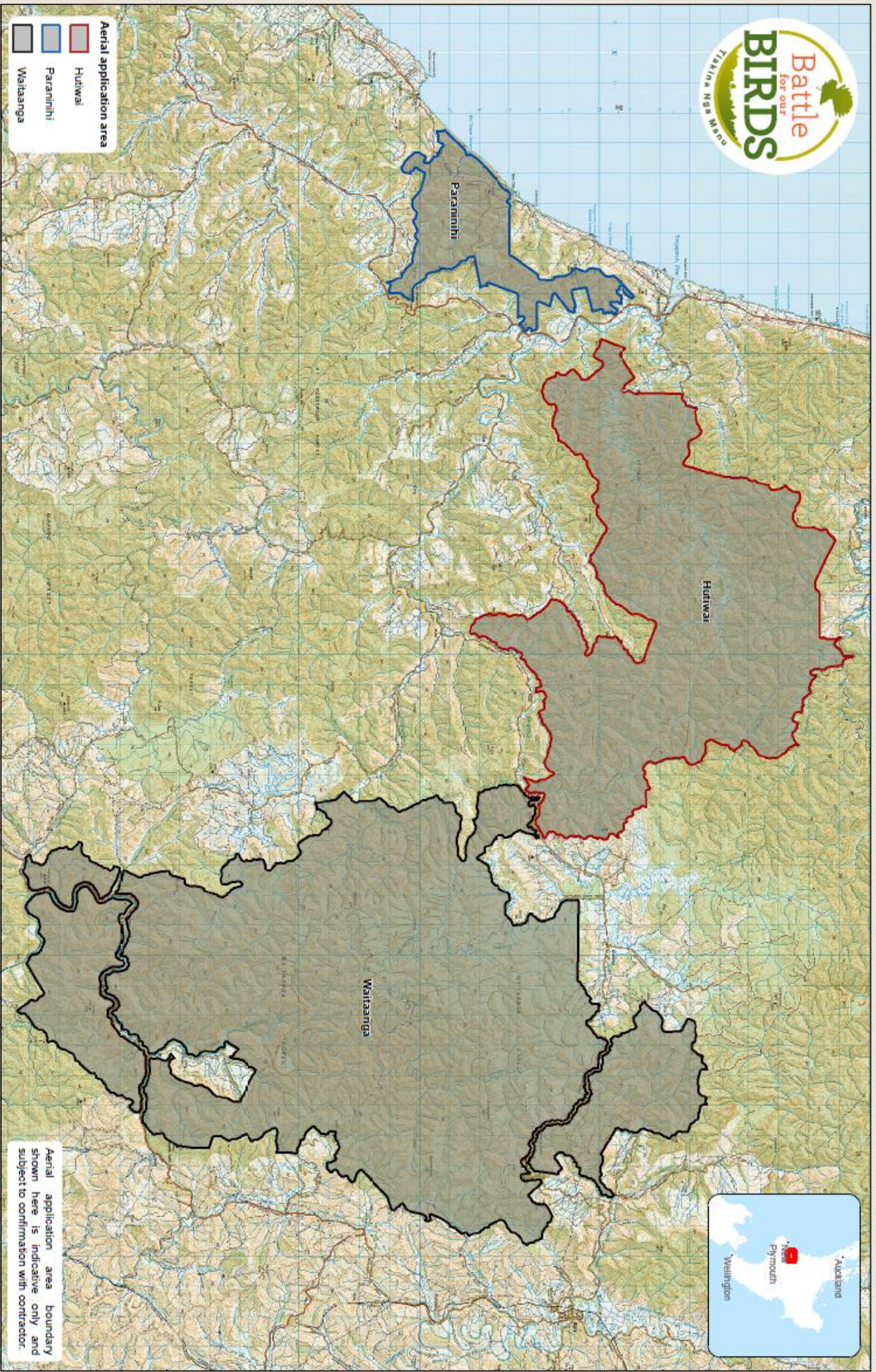


Pikirangi / Red Mistletoe. Photo: Alastair Robertson



Kokako have been reintroduced to Whitecliffs/Parininihi thanks to on-going predator control.





Aerial application area

- Hutiwai
- Paramihiti
- Waitaanga

Scale at A3 = 1:112,000
 NZ GD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator
 Not for navigation
 Crown Copyright Reserved
 Basemap: LINZ Topo250 / 50
 DDC, Observed Services
 30/05/2017



North Taranaki 1080 Operations

Overview

Aerial Pest Control 2017



Aerial application area boundary shown here is indicative only and subject to confirmation with contractor.



Department of Conservation
 Te Papa Ataraua
 New Zealand government

What predator-control methods are we using?

An aerial 1080 pest control operation will target possums and rats, but stoats will also be killed by eating rodents who have eaten the 1080 baits. There will be an aerial pre-feed of non-toxic baits to encourage possums and rats to eat the 1080 baits that are applied at a later date.

Time frame

Battle for our Birds pest control operations will take place in August/September to provide maximum protection during the breeding season of vulnerable species. However, the operations are weather-dependent, so dates may vary and will be confirmed closer to the time.

Planning

DOC is working with iwi and consulting with key stakeholders before finalising details. Before operations begin, DOC will contact neighbouring landowners, put up warning signs, and advertise in local newspapers. We'll let local schools and other interested parties such as bee keepers and local tramping and hunting clubs know what's going on.

Use of 1080 requires the consent of the Environmental Protection Authority and permission from public health. The process includes an assessment of environmental effects (AEE) to safeguard the public and the environment.

What you need to know

The pesticides used for aerial pest control are poisonous to humans and domestic animals. Poisoning can occur through eating cereal baits or poisoned animals.

- *The 1080 cereal baits are about 2 cm long, cylinder-shaped and are dyed **green**.*
- *Non-toxic pre-feed cereal pellets are about 2 cm long, cylinder-shaped but are **fawn-coloured** (not dyed).*

Dogs in particular are highly susceptible to 1080. The risk to dogs from poisoned carcasses will remain until they have completely rotted, perhaps for more than 6 months.

These risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

- *DO NOT touch bait*
- *WATCH CHILDREN at all times*
- *DO NOT EAT animals from this area*
- *Poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS keep dogs out of the area or use muzzles*

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. Warning signs indicate pesticide residues may still be present in baits or animals. When signs are removed, this means you can resume normal activities in the area. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs. If in doubt, check with DOC New Plymouth.

More information

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What to do if you suspect poisoning

Contact emergency services: 111
National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766